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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

This current invention is a system and method for automatically managing a multi-step process in which human providers are selected for some purpose. Typical applications include the selection process associated with employment services and dating services. A typical selection process includes multiple steps such as background checking, testing, interviewing, and acceptance by the provider and selecting entity, etc. This current invention is directed to linking and coordinating the various steps of the selection process (whatever those steps may be) through automated sequencing, coordinating, tracking and status reporting processes. The current invention also permits optional human intervention at various points in the sequencing, coordinating, tracking and reporting processes. Whether or not there is human intervention, this invention reduces the use of humans, thus potentially reducing cost and errors. It also potentially increases the pace at which the process can be completed end-to-end, and also potentially increases the number of providers that can be considered, thus facilitating selection of better providers from the pool of available providers. As a result of the automated process, new methods of compensation (i.e. compensation to the entity carrying out the selection process, such as an employment service) are made possible.

In addition the current invention provides a system and method for automatically scoring and ranking human providers with respect to selection criteria is described, making use of expert system concepts. Human shoppers are matched up with one another, and the usefulness of each match is scored on the basis of stated selection criteria of each human shopper. Human shoppers input their selection criteria

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partly by means of multiple-choice options, using forms which present to the human shopper only the relevant questions and multiple-choice options. The system determines relevance of particular questions and options on the basis of answers given by the human shopper to prior multiple-choice questions. The multiple-choice questions and options available to the system are stored in a Knowledge-base which is continuously updated. This updating of the Knowledge-base is based upon "write-in" answers previously supplied by human shoppers. The embodiments described herein include technology to permit human shoppers to update their stored records in response to new questions and options in the knowledge-base. These embodiments also include business processes that permit charging human shoppers for the opportunity to update their records or for the act of updating their records. The embodiments also include a comprehensive scoring system appropriate for a completely automated selection process including quantifiable measures and including verification and reference checking steps.

Also, this current invention provides a system for testing and/or interviewing human providers with respect to selection criteria is described, making use of expert system concepts. Test and interview questions, along with the relevance of each question to a particular selection criterion and along with information needed for scoring answers, are stored in a knowledge-base and periodically updated by experts. If a provider to be interviewed had been previously scored with respect to the same selection criteria, the resulting scoring information may be used as the starting point for an interview using this system. In this case, answers to interview questions are used to correct or verify the previous scoring. Human shoppers can use the current

embodiment repeatedly to update their scores. Business processes to permit this update process and to charge for it either on a usage basis or subscription basis are provided. The system can be used in several ways: 1) no human interviewer or tester is used; the interviewee simply answers questions that are printed, displayed, or spoken by an automated mechanism; or 2) questions are printed or displayed for use by a tester or interviewer. Answers can be written, spoken, or entered directly into a system by the interviewee. Spoken answers can be interpreted and entered in the system by means of a voice-entry mechanism.

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